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GRIZZLIES PLACE FOURTH AT BIG SKY
CONFERENCE TRACK MEET
rosenthal/jg

MISSOULA--

The University of Montana men's track and field team placed fourth in the seven-team field at the Big Sky Conference Track Meet this past weekend in Pocatello, Idaho on the Idaho State University campus.

The Grizzlies finished with 88 points. Idaho State won its third straight conference title, and 11th in 14 years with 121 points. Boise State was runnerup with 108 points followed by Weber State with 94, Montana, Northern Arizona with 79, Idaho with 53 and Montana State with 46.

Three individuals and one relay team won titles for Montana.

Dale Giem won the 400-meter intermediate hurdles title in a record time of 52.1. Giem posted the best time in the history of the conference earlier this spring with a 51.9. Those are the two fastest times run by a conference athlete this spring in the event. The sophomore from Twin Bridges, Mont. also was UM's top point-getter, accounting for 14 points. He ran a leg on the winning mile relay team and the third place 440-yard relay team, in addition to his 400-meter hurdles victory.

Gene Popovich won the shot put competition with a 55-11 throw, the best in the conference this year. He also has the top two conference performances in his event with a 55-1 mark established earlier in the spring. Popo, a senior from Butte, Mont., returned the shot title to Montana after a year's absence. He won the event in 1976, but sat out from competition last season.

An unexpected surprise performance was turned in by Bill Johnson, a sophomore from Billings, Mont. Heading into the meet with the sixth best performance in the league, Johnson turned in a lifetime best of 48-1 to win the triple jump.

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The final first-place showing by the Grizzlies was a fine mile relay run by Mike Andrews, Guy Rogers, Dale Giem and Ed Wells. The quartet posted the fastest time in the conference this season, winning the race in 3:11.78. It's the second straight year the Grizzlies have won the final event of the meet, the mile relay.

The Grizzlies also racked up more points than expected in the 10,000 meters going 2-3-4. Freshmen Tom Raunig and Dave Gordon finished just ahead of senior Dean Behrman to give Montana 18 points in that event.

But with those good performances, the Griz had letdowns in other areas and suffered from some bad luck.

Dave Gordon, owning the fastest time in the 5,000 meters previous to the meet, was not able to compete in the race after suffering a possible stress fracture in his right foot halfway through the 10,000-meter race on Friday. By Saturday, the distance ace was on crutches.

Junior Ed Wells placed third in the finals of the 400 meters, just ahead of teammate Mike Andrews, but was disqualified for stepping out of his lane. Andrews was awarded third but the UM team lost points on the disqualification of Wells.

Also, Tim Fox, assured of a third or fourth place finish in the 400-meter hurdles, hit a poorly placed hurdle, the last obstacle of the race on the stretch, fell and did not score in the event.

"We did suffer from some bad luck and let downs," UM Track Coach Harley Lewis said. "We just didn't score in a few events that we needed to score, and that kept us from contending. I was very pleased with Dale Giem's showing in the 400-meter hurdles and Gene Popovich's effort in the shot. Bill Johnson did a super job in winning the triple jump and our 10,000-meter contingent really did an outstanding job," Lewis said.

The meet was the last for Lewis as head track coach at Montana. He will now devote full-time to his position as athletic director, after 12 seasons as head track coach. For ten of those seasons, he also served as cross country coach. He has served as athletic director for the past three years.

Montana loses four point-scorers to graduation. Shot putter Gene Popovich, quarter-miler Mike Andrews, and distance runners Dean Behrman and Rob Reesman will graduate later this spring.

Listed below are seasonal bests and Big Sky Conference placers.

100 meters--Geoff Grassle, 10.68; Tom Kaluza, 10.9
 200 meters--Geoff Grassle, 21.5; Ed Wells, 21.75.
 400 meters--Ed Wells, 46.9; Mike Andrews (3rd in BSC meet), 47.52; John Roys, 49.4.
 800 meters--Carey Wallace, 1:52.3; Brad Sheldon, 1:53.7; Guy Rogers, 1:53.8.
 1,500 meters--Scott Browning, (5th in BSC meet), 3:55.1; Rob Reesman, 3:58.6.
 3,000-meter steeplechase--Rob Reesman, (6th in BSC meet), 9:27; Dave Hull, 9:28;
 Jim Entry, 9:49.3.
 5,000 meters--Dave Gordon, 14:16.6; Dave McDougall, 14:42.8.
 10,000 meters--Tom Raunig, (2nd in BSC meet), 31:00.17; Dave Gordon (3rd in BSC meet),
 31:02.32; Dean Behrman (4th in BSC meet), 31:02.71.
 110-meter hurdles--Tim Fox (4th in BSC meet), 14.34.
 400-meter hurdles--Dale Giem (1st in BSC meet), 51.9; Tim Fox 53.2; Russ Schmittou, 54.1.
 Triple jump--Bill Johnson (1st in BSC meet), 48-1; Joe Valacich, 43-9½.
 High jump--Steve Morgan (tied for 4th in BSC meet), 6-9½; Joe Valacich, 6-8¼.
 Long jump--Joe Valacich, 23-1; Bill Johnson, 21-8¼.
 Pole vault--Carl Marten, 15-0.
 Javelin--Monte Solberg, (3rd in BSC meet), 220-4; Paul Torgison, (5th in BSC meet),
 204-4; Chris McFaul, 198-9; Jay Huggins, 188-0.
 Shot put--Gene Popovich, (1st in BSC meet), 55-11.
 Discus--Brett Barrick, 138-0.
 440-yard relay--UM (Andrews, Grassle, Giem, Wells), (3rd in BSC meet), 41.56.
 400-meter relay--UM (Andrews, Grassle, Kaluza, Wells), 42.0.
 Mile relay--UM (Andrews, Rogers, Giem, Wells), (1st in BSC meet), 3:11.78.
 1,600-meter relay--UM (Rogers, Andrews, Giem, Wells), 3:16.5.

Places in BSC Meet:

Firsts: Dale Giem--400-meter hurdles (meet record)
 Gene Popovich--shot put
 Bill Johnson--triple jump
 Mile-relay team--mile relay
 Seconds: Tom Raunig--10,000 meters
 Thirds: Dave Gordon--10,000 meters
 Monte Solberg--javelin
 Mike Andrews--400 meters
 440-relay team--440 relay
 Fourths: Dean Behrman--10,000 meters
 Tim Fox--110-meter hurdles
 Steve Morgan (tie)--high jump

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Fifths: Scott Browning--1,500 meters
Paul Torgison--javelin

Sixths: Rob Reesman--steeplechase

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